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Application of Marketing Strategies and Mix to Digital Information Services (DIS): Nigerian University Libraries Perspectives

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Introduction

Library is a non-profit making organisation and its services have long been assumed to be offered free of charge to its clienteles/customers. It is also a general assumption that library users will come to the library and hence there is no need for marketing of library services. Today, these general assumptions have changed because the library is no more the only primary information provider; users have other primary sources they turn to when they need information services. There are other information providers and the competition is becoming keener on a daily basis. In fact, users are not relying on the library as the sole repository of knowledge any longer (Kaur, 2009).

The ever changing technological innovation has changed library functions and services. Technology has influenced library activities ranging from information capture, acquisition, organization, storage and dissemination of information to its clientele.   Information services and products are now in multi-formats which gave birth to what is called electronic/digital library. In the past, library user must get to the library building before using library facilities but today the physical library building is de-emphasized because technology has fashioned a new doorway for information services and products.

Ironically, the technological innovation has put libraries under intense pressure from competitors, such as, database vendors and other private information centres and search engines (Madhusudhan, 2008). The impact of the Internet is posing a big challenge to libraries (Brock and Tabaei, 2011). For instance Google is competing intensely with library with its vision of organizing the world information and making it accessible and useful globally (www.google.com.hk/corporate/index.) Library is no longer the primary information provider because now the first place people focus when there is information need is search engines (OCLC, 2005).

It is pertinent for library to go further ahead of Google by taking a step above being collector and organizer but focus more on the information users (Mi and Nesta, 2006). Therefore, if library is not to loose its role in the society there is need for marketing of library and information services. Librarians are being conscious of marketing strategies and many libraries are fully employing different means of promoting their information services to their users and potential users as well (Kaur and Rani, 2008).

In the past years, marketing is familiar and used only by profit making sectors and unfamiliar to not-for-profit organisations or public sectors such as library (Vasileiou and Rowley, 2011). However, the trend is changing now library is embracing marketing strategies to promote and sell information products and services (Kaur and Rani, 2008). Marketing is purely a strategy geared towards customers' satisfaction, thus, it is relevant to library because the primary philosophy of library and information science is customer-centered. The mission of any library is to satisfy the varied information needs of users, that is, the customers of libraries. Therefore, careful marketing strategy is required for library to survive in this information age.

Background to the Study

The Federal Republic of Nigeria is a developing country situated in the western part of African Continent and is considered as the most populous African country with over one hundred and fifty million people. It is located bordering the Gulf of Guinea, between Benin and Cameroon. Nigeria is a country of multi-ethnic with diverse cultural diversity, with thirty-six states, and six geo-political zones. The university education in Nigeria is traced back to January,

1948 with the establishment of College of Metropolitan of London in Ibadan, the ancient city in the western region now the capital of Oyo State. In 1962, the London College Ibadan became a full fledged university of Ibadan. Today, Nigeria has one hundred and twenty-eight universities, comprise 40 Federal Universities, 38 State Universities and 50 Private Universities (National University Commission, 2013)

Fig. 1 Federal Republic of Nigeria

The Sampled Universities
The study explored six university libraries consists of two private universities: Covenant University (CU), Redeemer's University (RUN) and four public universities: University of Ibadan (UI), University of Jos (UniJos), University of Lagos (UniLag) and University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN).

Literature Review
Marketing strategies in business as applied to information services
In the business world people have different understandings and conceptions of marketing, to some, marketing simply means pursuit of sales and profit making rather than customer satisfaction. Others see it as the production of brochures (Gupta and Jambhekar, 2002). The angle at which one looks at marketing as a concept will influence/determine its application. Marketing has been defined severally by many authors, in fact, the American Marketing Association (AMA) has defined marketing severally from the inception of marketing as a formal concept far back in 1935. Gupta and Savard (2010) note that definition of marketing changes from time to time to reflect the changing environment and the level of understanding of the concept. For instance, AMA defined and redefined marketing as follows, first in 1935, secondly in 1985 then in 2004 and 2007:

the performance of business activities that direct the flow of goods and services from producer to consumers. (AMA, 1935).

consists of individual and organizational activities that facilitate and expedite exchange relationships in a dynamic environment through the creation, servicing, distribution, promotion and pricing of goods, services and ideas (AMA, 1985).

organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating and delivery value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefits the organisation and its stakeholders (AMA, 2004).

marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large (AMA, 2007).

The above definitions emphasize different aspects, the 1935 definition stresses distribution functions, getting the products to the consumers, while 1985 definition focuses on managerial tasks, organisational processes and marketing strategic dimensions, that of 2004 added value, management of customer relationships and stakeholders (Gupta and Savard, 2010). Looking at the 2007 AMA definition of marketing, it incorporates 'set of institutions', 'exchanging offerings' and 'society at large' (external environments). The knowledge of marketing is increasing and the concept and definition is expanding, thus, marketing is dynamic.

Jestin and Parameswari, (2002) declare that

marketing involves activities such as identifying target market's needs, designing suitable services or products to meet their needs and the use of effective pricing, communication and distribution to inform, motivate and serve the market (p.2).

In Singh words marketing is a business philosophy that places the customer at the centre of the ogranisational activities (2009). Therefore, marketing in business world is a purposive and proactive organizational activities directed towards satisfying targeted customers to achieve the organisation's goals. Adeyoyin (2005) affirms that marketing concept rotates on three pillars namely; consumer-centred, profit-centred and anticipating of changes through time. On the other hand, Madhusudhan (2008) submits that the underlying aim of marketing is to identify the client base, determine and fill its needs, wants and demands by designing and delivering appropriate products and services.

With these definitions at the background it is necessary to look at marketing in the context of library and information service. Over the years, there have been debates on the application of business marketing concept to public service organisations such as hospitals, universities and libraries. The argument was based on the appropriateness of business marketing for such organisations because they are non-profit-organisation, funded by the government with different operational environments and different objectives compared with the business world. In this context, Professor of Marketing, Kotler called service marketing as "Social marketing" and defined it as thus:

the analysis, planning, implementation, and control of carefully formulated programmes designed to bring about voluntary exchanges of values with target markets for the purpose of achieving organizational objectives (Kotler, 1988).

The philosophy of library is to continually meet the changing information needs of its users and it does this through continuous study of its customers/library clienteles in order to either evaluate the existing library services or to design a new service. In his own words, Rowley (2003) defines information marketing as the marketing of information-based products and services. In a more recent literature, Singh (2009) defines marketing in relation to library and information services as 'the process of planning, pricing, promoting, and distributing goods and services to create "exchanges" that satisfy the library and the customer' (p.640). From the above definitions, three issues are prominent; the issue of the goods/services, the ogranisational objectives and the customers' satisfaction. It is suffice to say that marketing in a library setting is more than presenting books in a nice arrangement, printing flyers, hosting an event but it is rather satisfying the ever changing users' needs. It is important to note that librarians have different understandings of marketing which is obviously responsible for the variation in approach or strategy adopted by libraries for information services.

Marketing strategy is a well structured plan that highlights the organisation's goals and quest and the specific process of achieving those set of goals. According to Jestin and Paramesuari (2002) marketing strategy means selecting proper techniques in proportion and balance. Gupta and Savard (2010) assert that marketing strategy encompasses such components as evaluating the needs of the customers, planning the various elements of the mix to answer those needs, involving the entire organisation not only marketing department and evaluating the results. Fundamentally marketing strategy is primarily to:

i. understand the clients which is called market research, identifies the client's market that is market segment and target.
ii. identify the organisation's strengths as a competitive business,
iii. know the products the clients want and where they want it (product and place in marketing mix) develop effective and efficient procedure (process) (Jose and Bhat, 2007).

The need for information services marketing were summed up by Jose and Bhat (2007) as focusing on the customer, improving the image of the library, building relationship with the corporate world and cost recovery. Therefore, effective marketing strategy takes information services to the customer and it comprises market segmentation, market research, and marketing mix (Nooshinfard and Ziaei, 2011).

Market Segmentation (MS) in LIS

Market segmentation consists of identification of one's market, its size, competitors and what attribute of one's products/services that satisfies the customers (Curators of the of Missouri, 2010). To relate this to information services, Doland (2006) submits that in defining market segmentation one has to provide answer to the following questions, who are the target customers? Who uses what services? What are the subject areas? Who are your competitors? Every library needs to define clearly its target library users, categorize them according to their needs areas then package or organize relevant information services to meet their needs. Libraries need to be aware of the fact that there are competitors outside who are also interested in the same target customers and they are working relentlessly to take over the customers. In

essence, market segmentation in library context is to group the users according to their characteristics, class and information needs in order to provide personalized services rather than generalized services. Market segmentation is done through market research.

Market Research (MR) In LIS

The American Marketing Association (AMA) defined market research as follows:

> Marketing research is the function that links the consumer, customer, and public to the marketer through information used to identify and define marketing opportunities and problems; generate, refine, and evaluate marketing actions; monitor marketing performance; and improve understanding of marketing as a process. Marketing research specifies the information required to address these issues, designs the method for collecting information, manages and implements the data collection process, analyzes the results, and communicates the findings and their implications. *(AMA, 2004)*

Market research (MR) is primarily to understand the market and demand for services, it could be an annual user survey or weekly customer care meetings. It is the study of the actual and potential market size, user market segmentation and identification of users' needs (Kanaujia, 2004). Similarly, The Curators of the of Missouri (2010) see market research as a sequence of organizational planned activities aims at identifying customers needs, wants and satisfying these needs and making a sensible profit on a quality product or service. MR is an orderly and objective way of learning about your potential customers and your competition. They further submitted that there are two types of MR - primary market research and secondary market research. Primary market research is when an organisation carries out a direct research to identify its customers' needs, which might be through survey with questionnaire or experiments, test marketing or behaviour observation.

Secondary market research is when an organisation use secondary data, that is, what others have researched and published about the customers' needs. It could be published surveys, books magazines, in short, it is reviewing other researchers work and then analyze the information on the proposed services. This is always done before the primary market research is carried out. In information service context, a library could review literature of other library or information industry to get information on its potential library users, proposed services and the competition. In a nutshell, market research is a marketing strategy that should be carried out from time to time, not a once and for all activity because it involves human beings that is susceptible to change.

To meet the ever changing information needs of the library users, library needs to keep in touch with users through market research to identify their needs and wants. Libraries need as a matter of policy, to conduct annual survey of the actual market size, potential market size, to identify users' needs to evaluate the existing services and develop appropriate new services (Kanaujia, 2004; Henderson, 2005). Regular market research to know the users' value, needs and wants is the key to success of any library (Mi and Nesta, 2006).

Applying Marketing Mix to Information Services

Kotler defines marketing mix as "… the set up of controllable variables and their levels that a firm uses to influence the target market" (Kotler, 1988 in Adeyoyin, 2005). The traditional marketing mix is the blend of four "Ps" namely, Product, Place, Price and Promotion to reach the target market (Jose and Bhat, 2007, p.26). The 4Ps was introduced by Jerome E. McCarthy in 1960 and it is the foundation for the modern marketing theory but for services marketing three more "Ps" had been added to have 7Ps. They are People, Physical evidence and Process (Jose and Bhat, 2007). In essence marketing mix are variables that the organisation controls to influence its customers in order to achieve its own objective. Marketing mix is very crucial in library and information services marketing in order to achieve library's main objective which is to meet information users' needs and to retain its position as primary information provider.

Product

It is an important factor in marketing mix and without it no organisation can exist. According to Madhusudhan (2008),"product is anything that can be offered to a market to satisfy a need" (p.3). Dhima and Sharma (2009) gave example of marketable products as, physical goods, services, places, ideas, and others. The library products are its various information services rendered to the users, which library designs putting into consideration the users' needs, that is to say, library information services are customer-focused. Library information services are varied, such as, services offer to clienteles and potential users, reference services, referral services, circulation services, traditional dissemination of information, electronic services, interlibrary loan, selective dissemination of information (SDI), reprographic services, bibliographic information, abstract and summaries of information (Adeyoyin, 2005: Dhima and Sharma, 2009; Mishra, 2010). Others are 'behind the scene services' like organisation of library materials that is cataloguing and classification of information materials (Adeyoyin, 2005).

Place

Place connotes that the products/services should be offered in a place that is reachable for the customers to easily access them. The information services should be rendered in a convenient place for the users. It is expected that the information services mentioned above are disseminate/distribute in a place whether physical place or virtual place. The place should be convenient for users to access because if the place is not convenient or accessible, it will pose emotional problems to users the usage of library services will drastically reduced (Kaur and Rani, 2008). Ravichandran and Babu (2008) posit that library should expand service area to where customers can easily access its information services. With computerized library it is envisaged that digital information services would be delivered in the right format at the right time and at the right place (Kaur and Rani, 2008).

Price

The price of information services is the seemingly difficult one in library and information services marketing mix. Dhiman and Sharma (2009) term it as a flexible and dominant element that determines the revenue and profitability of the organisation. Traditionally, people feel it is repulsive to pay for library services but in recent years there have been studies supporting, canvassing and embracing the fee-pay information services (Ifidon and Nwalo, 2003; Adeyoyin, 2005; Igbeka, 2008; Kaur and Rani, 2008). Kaur and Rani (2008) avert that information professionals also are of mixed and split response to the issue of pricing of information services.

Promotion

Promotion is one of the marketing mix that is well known in library and information services. Traditionally, libraries promote its information services through display of new books, posters, exhibitions, bulletins, user orientation programmes, brochures to target groups, publicity and contact programmes and library outreach (Kaur and Rani, 2008). All these are done to promote the library information services to its clienteles (Kaur, 2009). Today, promotion of information services has moved to a higher level because of information technological innovations. There are diverse ways employed by libraries to promote information services such as, using of e-mail to library users, library websites and usage of social networking tools (Vasileiou and Rowley, 2011). A very effective promotion is by word of mouth and Jose and Bhat (2007) attest to this that the best way to promote information service is mouth-to-mouth. This is in agreement with the findings of Vasileiou and Rowley (2011) that word-of-mouth is an influencing promotional tool.

People

The next 'P' in marketing mix is People, which focus on employees or personnel of an organisation. In this context, library personnel play a vital role towards the successful delivering of information services. The library personnel interact with the information users/clienteles on daily basis and their presentation and general disposition speaks volume about the image of the library. It is of a necessity for library personnel to be proactive and have cheerful attitude towards the clienteles. Any unpleasant attitude to the clienteles will mar the image of the library. Marketing orientation is not only for a designated marketing department but it is an organisation function right from the top management to the frontline departments. Gupta and Jambhekar (2002) declare that library personnel are deciding factor for the success of marketing strategy in the library. All library personnel should have a marketing culture as they offer various information services to the clientele in order to achieve the goal of the library (Jose and Bhat, 2007).

Physical Evidence

This refers to environment wherein products/services are offered to customers. In the case of information services it is expected that physical library building should be functional and attractive to clienteles. The arrangement should be inviting and user-friendly to all categories of clienteles. Jose and Bhat (2007) specifically mentioned 'disabled-friendly access provisions', this is lacking in Nigerian context but it should be seriously considered when library and other public organizational building are constructed.

Process

In offering information services library personnel are expected to follow the procedures, mechanism and work flow activities to see that library philosophy is achieved. The Ranganathan theory of librarianship which is mainly user focused, its aim is to see that the right information services are rendered to the right users at the right time in order not to waste user's time and not to render any information service useless, thus, due process should be maintained.

To sum up, the 7Ps marketing mix discussed above place information service firmly in the perception of their communities they serve.

Service Marketing Triangle as applied to Library and Information Services

The service marketing triangle is a model that shows the relationship between the organisation, the employees and the customers (See figure 2). At the left of the triangle are the library personnel (employees) interacting with the library users (customers) on the right side that is interactive marketing by delivering the promises. The library management is at the apex of the triangle where the external marketing is made by setting the promises to the users/customer and also relating to the left side in internal marketing to enable the promise.
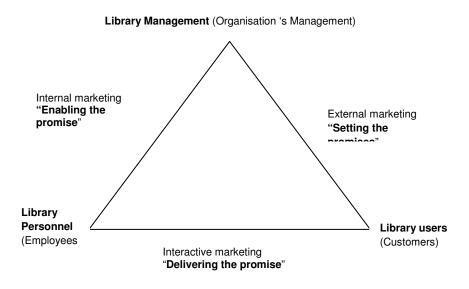
Library Management (Organisation 's Management)

Internal marketing
**"Enabling the
promise"**

External marketing
**"Setting the
~~promises~~"**

**Library
Personnel**
(Employees

Library users
(Customers)

Interactive marketing
"**Delivering the promise**"

Fig. 2: Library marketing triangle (Adapted from Christian Gronroos, 1994)

Marketing Strategies for Digital Information Services

In discussing marketing strategies for digital services it is important to briefly examine the nature of digital information services. Digital information services have been described by Ravichandran and Babu (2008) as information and knowledge resources that are available in electronic forms including books, journals, journal articles, CDs, videos, databases, films audio digital products, online publishing, public domain and other intellectual properties that are available through internet.
Digital information services have some benefits over the print information services as listed below:
  i.   multiple access is allowed.
  ii. continuous access at any time and place.
  iii. instant delivery.
  iv. saving of shelf space.
  v.   prevention from damage, loss or theft.
  vi. no shipping and handling.
  vii. access to out of print materials (Ravichandran and Babu, 2008).

However, its drawbacks include but not limited to the following:

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i.   cost of e-book readers.
    ii. difficulty in accessing computers or the Internet.
    iii. resistance to change in reading habits.
    iv. lack of knowledge of software / hardware. (Ravichandran and Babu, 2008).

With the above characteristics of digital information services it is obvious that the traditional marketing techniques may not be suitable for it. In the past libraries have employed different marketing activities such as posters, bulletins, flyers/brochures, newsletter, pins, user education and demonstrations and outreaches (Kaur, 2009; Kennedy, 2011) but with the emergence of digital information services the traditional marketing activities are not adequate.

Henderson (2005) noted that there was scarcity of detailed discussion on marketing of digital information services until few years ago. However, the situation is changing gradually as Kennedy (2011) attested to this in her study entitled 'what are we really doing to market electronic resources?' reviewed 24 literature on marketing electronic resources. She submitted that first and foremost a prerequisite standard market plan must be put in place which consists of identification of the market target audience (market segmentation), justification of the market (goals) and evaluation of the market techniques (assessment). Of course no library exists without its target audience, specific objectives of the market must be well spelt out or defined to be able to assess the library performance. In order to monitor the marketing activities evaluation is very vital to market plan. It was noted that many libraries are failing in this regard because Kennedy found that more than half of the libraries in her study did not have a clear assessment plan (Kennedy, 2011).

The literature reviewed in this study point to relationship marketing (RM) strategy among others for effective marketing of digital information services (FOLIO, 2004; Henderson, 2005; Mi and Nesta, 2006; Lepik, 2007; Kaur, 2009; Singh and Skula 2009; Kennedy, 2011). Henderson (2005) submitted that the growth in digital information services is centered on a client-oriented approach rather than delivery or sales and this informed the option for relationship marketing.   In addition, the characteristics of major users (today's learners which have been described as 'Net generation learners' (Prensky, 2001), 'New learners' (Doiron and Asselin, 2011) of digital information services are compatible with relationship marketing strategy because they naturally value relationship and their independence (Mi and Nesta, 2006; Doiron and Asselin, 2011).

FOLIO (2004) submit that RM centers on developing a close relationship between the marketer and the customers which is crucial for library and information services because most of the services are 'repeat business' and the key ingredient is customer loyalty. To maintain users' loyalty to the library then communication is a vital key. In traditional library, users can come to the library and discuss with reference librarian or library personnel at the circulation desk but in digital environments physical contact between the library personnel and library users may not be possible. This infers that for digital information services traditional means of communication may not be sufficient. According to Kennedy (2011) e-communication is a suitable option, such as, the use of blackboard, email services, feedback forum, home/office mascot; social networking tools, web page alert, screen saver and web page customization.   Nevertheless, the traditional marketing techniques (human interaction and physical medium) would also complement. Human interaction includes word of mouth, phone calls, office visit, collaboration between

faculty/librarians, and library users as marketing tools. Physical medium of communication like posters, flyers/brochures, postcards/direct letters and newsletters could be employed where applicable (Kennedy, 2011).

The information technologies enable RM in the following ways, the use of customer relationship management system is used to manage relationship marketing by using the data from existing library management systems to target specified customers and promote specific services to them. This could be done through sending of email to users, online social network, feedback forum, phone calls (Henderson, 2005; Kennedy, 2011). The digital environment enables the library to organize users' personal data, stores the data in central database for market segmentation. The users' population would be classified in groups in line with their characteristics, the demographic details such as age, ethnic origin, gender, occupation or according to their borrowing characteristics. Other useful data are their information interests, the library services they use and the time they visit the library. These would be helpful to evaluate the level of usage and appropriateness of the current services, review or termination of existing ones if need be, also it would be useful for decision making in respect of creation of new services (Henderson, 2005). Henderson expatiates that to provide suitable and appropriate services, libraries need to know who their customers and potential customers are through market research mentioned above.

The library website is a crucial marketing tool for digital information services. According to Kaur (2009) relationship market is suitable for digital information services and its activities is facilitated through open communication channels via the library web such as reference librarians online service – "Ask-a-Librarian"; advertisement and feedback from users through the social networking tools and online chat with the users. Marketing on the library website would guarantee that users know what information exists, know how this information will look in the interface, know where to find this information on the site and on the page, know how to use information and use website as a navigator for all users (Nooshinfard and Ziaei, 2011). Moreover, Nooshinfard and Ziaei (2011) quoting Crawford and Gorman (1995) aver that library website will enable the library of the future to achieve the five Ranganathan's law of librarianship and adapted it as follows:

  i.   Libraries serve humanity
 ii.   Respect all forms by which knowledge is communicated
iii.   Use technology intelligently to enhance service
 iv.   Protect free access to knowledge; and
  v.   Honor the past and create the future.

Nooshinfard and Ziaei (2011) posit that the only way to attract users' attention and trust to library website is through the use of words, pictures, pages, information, timely responses to emails, moderating the delivery process and emergency delivery.

Subsequently, Henderson (2005) submits the following as the benefit of relationship marketing:

  i.   No cost of acquiring new customers
 ii.   Less need to offer incentives to customers
iii.   Less price sensitive because loyal customers are pleased with the services
 iv.   Loyal satisfied customers will we commend the services to others

In relation to pricing of digital information services Jain and Kannan (2002) posit that digital information services could be priced by flat rate pricing, connect-time-based pricing, per-successful-search pricing or subscription-fee per year pricing. Taking cognizance of the

different factors and strategies discussed under the pricing strategy for information services. According to Igbeka (2008) pricing of information services is of necessity especially for personalized services, such as literature searches, scanned documents, document transfer and delivery, inter-library loans and others. This is in agreement with Ifidon and Nwalo (2003) submission that the issue of free library and information services should be re-examined because information services are capital-intensive coupled with the fact that libraries are facing budget cut.

Digital Information Services in University Libraries in Nigeria

Marketing of library services is relatively new in Nigeria, but efforts are on the increase to do so (Ifidon and Nwalo, 2003). It is evident that many faculty members in Nigerian universities are not fully aware of many library products and services (Popoola, 2008) then, the awareness level of students could be imagined. This, points to the fact that Nigerian libraries need to employ marketing strategies to adequately inform and convince both users and potential users of their services and relevance in this information age.

There are few digital information services available in University libraries in Nigeria because of many challenges in the country, such as, dearth of ICT infrastructure and facilities, inadequate funding of libraries, unskilled library personnel and others (Ajegbomogun, 2010; Etebu, 2010; Okiy, 2010) which are common to many developing countries. From previous studies, digital information services that are available in University libraries in Nigeria are Internet search, Email services, CD-ROM database search and printing and electronic copying (Ajegbomogun, 2010 and Etebu, 2010).

Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria, like any other developing countries university libraries are making efforts to provide digital information services/products from the meager library budget. However, these digital information products are not adequately utilised because the university community are not fully aware of their existence.   It is therefore, the responsibility of university libraries to justify the money spent on digital information services by making them available to their clients. Thus, the adoption of marketing strategies by university libraries to woo their clients so as to justify the hard earning resources is germane. The aim of this study therefore is to identify the available digital information services/products and strategies employ to market them.

Objective of the Study

The study aims to investigate the type of digital information services available and marketing strategies employ by university libraries in Nigeria. Consequently, the following specific objectives were:
(1) To identify digital information services available in university libraries in Nigeria;
(2) To ascertain the marketing strategies employ for the digital information services; and
(3) To identify the prices of digital information services in university libraries in Nigeria.

Research Questions

What are digital information products/services available in the selected University libraries in Nigeria?
What are the marketing strategies employ for the digital information services?

What are the prices charged for the digital information services in University libraries in Nigeria?

Methodology

The study employed case study approach and six university libraries were presented. To gather data that is truly representative of Nigerian universities, the decision was taken to draw the sample from both public and private universities. Six university libraries each from public and private universities were contacted but only four public and two private university libraries were able to give full details and responses to the questions asked. The two private universities are Covenant University, (CU) and Redeemer's University (RUN), while the four public universities are University of Ibadan (UI), University of Lagos (UniLag), University of Jos (UniJos) and University of Nigeria Nnsukka (UNN). The universities are from three geo-political zones out of six geo-political zones in Nigeria. The respondents were System Librarians and Library Officers in charge of digital information services in the six university libraries in Nigeria. Data were collected through the library websites, telephone interviews, online chat and email.

Findings

Digital Information Services

To illicit information on the available digital information services in the selected university libraries, the researcher inquired on the types of digital information services available in each of the libraries. The study found that all the university libraries studied have both free access digital information services and closed access ones. The identified digital information products/services, such as, Internet service, computer laboratory, OPAC and CDROM are available in all the six university libraries. Also different types of OPAC, were used by the university libraries, three of them: Redeemers University (RUN), University of Lagos (UniLag) and University of Nigeria (UNN) used KOHA while, University of Ibadan (UI) and University of Jos (UniJos) used VIRTUA and Covenant University used ALICE.

Another digital information product that is very prominent among the six universities is E-resources. The most common E-resources are AGORA, HINARI, OARE, EBSCOHOST, JSTOR, Oxford and African Digital Library, however, there are other E-resources that are peculiar to each of the university as indicated in table 1. Besides, Institutional Repository (IR) is another digital information service that is available in Covenant University, University of Jos and University of Nigeria. Finally, E-books and E-Journals are also available in five of the university libraries except University of Ibadan.

Table 1: Available digital information services/products in the six university libraries

University	CDROM	E-Resources	OAIR	OPAC	Online Reference	Internet Services	E-Books and E-Journals	Computer laboratory

					Services			
CU	Available	HINARI, EBSCO, JSTOR, AGORA, SCIENCE DIRECT, SAGE, RESEARCH AFRICA, OARE,	Available	ALICE	Available (through blog site, e-mail and facebook).	Available	Available	Available
RUN	Available	AGORA, HINARI, OARE,	N/A	KOHA	N/A	Available	Available	Available
UI	Available	AGORA, HINARI, EBSCO HOST EGRANARY DIGITAL LIBRARY, LANTEEAL, AJOL, DOAJ, INASP, POPLINE, OARE, PUBMED	N/A	VIRTUA	N/A	Available	N/A	Available
UniLag	Available	EBSCOHOST ELIBRARY GHANDI LIBRARY IRC JSTOR, OXFORD, DOAJ AFRICAN DIGITAL LIBRARY, SSRN, WESTLAW	N/A	KOHA	N/A	Available	Available	Available
UniJos	Available	JSTOR, NAP, ADL, DATAD, AGORA, EBSCOHOST, HINARI	Available	VIRTUA	N/A	Available	Available	Available
UNN	Available	OXFORD, OARE, JSTOR, EBSCOHOST, HINARI, AGORA, CHEMISTRY CENTRAL, AFRICAN INDEX MEDICUS, INASP, EOLSS, INFORMINE,	Available	KOHA	N/A	Available	Available	Available

		POLSSE.						

Marketing Strategies for Digital Information Services (DIS)

As regards marketing of DIS, the respondents were asked about the type of marketing strategies employ in their libraries for DIS in the sampled university libraries. The findings show that varied strategies were employed. **CU** library markets her digital information services through avenues such as, orientation for both staff and first year students at the beginning of every academic year, sending of emails to users to inform them of new E-resources. The library management also takes advantages of meetings and other university gatherings to sensitize members of the available e-resources. **RUN** library employs newsletters, weblog, notice board, and orientation programmes to market her digital information services. **UI** library explores marketing strategies such as, orientation, training programmes, sending of email to users on selective relevant e-resources, display, news flash on library website. In the same vein, **UniLag** uses phone, library website, orientation, user training, news flash, exhibition and display as marketing strategies for her digital information services.

Similarly, **UniJos** library markets digital information products/services through demonstration during the orientation, regular campus-wide sentisation and training programmes, and sending of email to users to inform them of new subscription to databases through webmail services and intranet. Finally, **UNN** library communicates the community about her digital information services/products through display, library website, downloading and packaging the online journals and send to relevant departments and faculties.

Prices of the Digital Information Services/Products

The respondents were asked to indicate the prices of DIS in their university libraries. All the university libraries sampled offer their DIS free of charge for registered users. However, **UI** library charges about $15 for the use of E-classroom for seminars and workshops, about 32 cents per hour for internet search and **UnilLag** library charges 62 cents per day for use of a laptop. Printing of downloaded materials is paid for; **UI, UniLag,** and **UNN** libraries charge about 12 cents per page while **RUN** and **UniJos** libraries charge about 6 cents per page while **CU** did not indicate the price for printing.

Discussion

The findings revealed that university libraries in Nigeria are providing digital information services/products to its clienteles. Like other university libraries in developing countries they depend mostly on free sites though they also subscribe to other secured databases. The digital information services/products available in the sampled university libraries are both open access and secured. Clienteles of these university libraries must have registered before they can access most of the digital information services/products. The available digital information services/products in the six university libraries are in line with what Ravichandran and Babu (2008) referred to as digital information products. These digital information services/products are CD-ROM, Internet Services, OPAC, e-resources, e-books, e-journals and open access

institutional repositories (OAIR), online reference services and computer laboratory. Comparing this with previous study of Etebu (2010) and Ajegbomogun (2010) there has been improvement and increase in available digital information services/products in Nigerian universities. Those recent additional digital information services/products are OPAC, e-books, e-journals, open access institutional repository and online reference services. However, only **CU** library is operating online reference services.

As regards the marketing strategies employed, technology innovations have enabled the university libraries to employ relationship marketing strategy. It is done through the sending of emails and messages through the social networking software like Facebook. This is in agreement with Kennedy (2011) that submitted that the use of web page alerts, email and social networking tools are suitable e-communication for marketing of digital information services/products. Others are online chat, library website and Newsflash. This concurs with the submissions of Henderson (2005), Kaur (2009), Nooshinfard and Ziaei, (2011) and Kennedy (2011). The traditional marketing activities such as display, demonstration, orientation and exhibition are not left out in marketing digital information services. In addition, training progrommes and presentations at meetings and university gatherings are useful marketing strategies, this is in agreement with Jose and Bhat (2007) that attested that effective promotion is by word of mouth.

It is obvious that library is a non-profit organisation and its services are rendered at free of charge. The findings of this study attest to this because all the digital information services are free except the use of facilities like e-classroom for seminar, loan of laptop, internet search and printing of documents that are paid for. Even the payment made is not to recover the cost of those facilities but just to offset part of expenses for maintaining those facilities.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study explored the seven marketing mix and relates it to LIS especially in relation to digital information services. Marketing strategies that are suitable for digital information services are discussed. Ultimately, it has discovered that digital information services/products are available and are on the increase in universities libraries in Nigeria. Most importantly, the study identified digital information services/products in Nigerian universities libraries which include e-resources, OPAC, CD-ROM, Online reference service, OAIR, Internet search, e-books, e-journals and computer laboratory. It is pertinent to market these digital information services in order to justify the huge amount being spent, hence, marketing strategies such as, library orientation, demonstration, training programmes, word of mouth, sending of emails, and library website among others are presented. Besides, it discovered that most of digital information services/products are free of charge while token fee is charged for few facilities. However, the fees charged are not to recover the cost of those facilities but just to offset part of the maintenance cost.

University libraries in Nigeria should learn best practices from developed countries in order to effectively market their digital information services/products. The following recommendations could be of help.
(1) The library should endeavour to increase user studies research from time to time to keep abreast of their users' information needs and package their digital information accordingly.

(2) In addition, libraries should engage social networking tools, web page alert, screen saver and web page customization for marketing digital information services/products.

(3) Finally, communication is germane in any relationship, hence, university libraries should endeavour to use e-communication channels such as email alert, online reference services and feedback forum to keep the relationship that have been established.

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